

**§ 20.401 Rule 401. Effect of decision on administrative or merged appeal on claimant's appellate rights.**

(a) *Merged appeal.* If the administrative appeal is merged, the appellate decision on the merged appeal will constitute final disposition of the claimant's appellate rights.

(b) *Appeal not merged.* If the claimant does not authorize merger, normal appellate rights on the same issue are preserved, and the Chairman will assign the proceeding to a Member or panel of Members of the Board who did not make the decision on the administrative appeal. The period of time from the date of notification to the claimant of the administrative appeal to the date of the Board's decision on the administrative appeal is not chargeable to the claimant for purposes of determining the time limit for perfecting his or her separate appeal.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7106)

[57 FR 4109, Feb. 3, 1992, as amended at 61 FR 20450, May 7, 1996]

**§§ 20.402–20.499 [Reserved]**

**Subpart F—Simultaneously Contested Claims**

**§ 20.500 Rule 500. Who can file an appeal in simultaneously contested claims.**

In a simultaneously contested claim, any claimant or representative of a claimant may file a Notice of Disagreement or Substantive Appeal within the time limits set out in Rule 501 (§ 20.501 of this part).

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105(b)(2), 7105A)

**§ 20.501 Rule 501. Time limits for filing Notice of Disagreement, Substantive Appeal, and response to Supplemental Statement of the Case in simultaneously contested claims.**

(a) *Notice of Disagreement.* In simultaneously contested claims, the Notice of Disagreement from the person adversely affected must be filed within 60 days from the date of mailing of the notification of the determination to him or her; otherwise, that determination will become final. The date of mailing of the letter of notification

will be presumed to be the same as the date of that letter for purposes of determining whether a Notice of Disagreement has been timely filed.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105A(a))

(b) *Substantive Appeal.* In the case of simultaneously contested claims, a Substantive Appeal must be filed within 30 days from the date of mailing of the Statement of the Case. The date of mailing of the Statement of the Case will be presumed to be the same as the date of the Statement of the Case for purposes of determining whether an appeal has been timely filed.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105A(b))

(c) *Supplemental Statement of the Case.* Where a Supplemental Statement of the Case is furnished by the agency of original jurisdiction in a simultaneously contested claim, a period of 30 days from the date of mailing of the Supplemental Statement of the Case will be allowed for response, but the receipt of a Supplemental Statement of the Case will not extend the time allowed for filing a Substantive Appeal as set forth in paragraph (b) of this section. The date of mailing of the Supplemental Statement of the Case will be presumed to be the same as the date of the Supplemental Statement of the Case for purposes of determining whether a response has been timely filed. Provided a Substantive Appeal has been timely filed in accordance with paragraph (b) of this section, the response to a Supplemental Statement of the Case is optional and is not required for the perfection of an appeal.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105(d)(3), 7105A(b))

[57 FR 4109, Feb. 3, 1992, as amended at 68 FR 64806, Nov. 17, 2003]

**§ 20.502 Rule 502. Time limit for response to appeal by another contesting party in a simultaneously contested claim.**

A party to a simultaneously contested claim may file a brief or argument in answer to a Substantive Appeal filed by another contesting party. Any such brief or argument must be filed with the agency of original jurisdiction within 30 days from the date the content of the Substantive Appeal

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is furnished as provided in §19.102 of this chapter. Such content will be presumed to have been furnished on the date of the letter that accompanies the content.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105A(b))

[66 FR 60153, Dec. 3, 2001]

### **§ 20.503 Rule 503. Extension of time for filing a Substantive Appeal in simultaneously contested claims.**

An extension of the 30-day period to file a Substantive Appeal in simultaneously contested claims may be granted if good cause is shown. In granting an extension, consideration will be given to the interests of the other parties involved. A request for such an extension must be in writing and must be made prior to expiration of the time limit for filing the Substantive Appeal.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105A(b))

### **§ 20.504 Rule 504. Notices sent to last addresses of record in simultaneously contested claims.**

Notices in simultaneously contested claims will be forwarded to the last address of record of the parties concerned and such action will constitute sufficient evidence of notice.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105A(b))

### **§§ 20.505–20.599 [Reserved]**

## **Subpart G—Representation**

CROSS-REFERENCE: In cases involving access to medical records relating to drug abuse, alcoholism, alcohol abuse, sickle cell anemia, or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus, also see 38 U.S.C. 7332.

### **§ 20.600 Rule 600. Right to representation.**

An appellant will be accorded full right to representation in all stages of an appeal by a recognized organization, attorney, agent, or other authorized person.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 5901–5905, 7105(a))

### **§ 20.601 Rule 601. Only one representative recognized.**

A specific claim may be prosecuted at any one time by only one recognized organization, attorney, agent or other

person properly designated to represent the appellant.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105(b)(2))

### **§ 20.602 Rule 602. Representation by recognized organizations.**

In order to designate a recognized organization as his or her representative, an appellant must execute a VA Form 21–22, “Appointment of Veterans Service Organization as Claimant’s Representative.” This form gives the organization power of attorney to represent the appellant. The designation will be effective when it is received by the agency of original jurisdiction or, if the appellate record has been certified to the Board for review, by the Board of Veterans’ Appeals. A properly filed designation made prior to appeal will continue to be honored, unless it has been revoked by the appellant or unless the representative has properly withdrawn.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 7105(b)(2))

### **§ 20.603 Rule 603. Representation by attorneys-at-law.**

(a) *Designation.* An attorney-at-law may be designated as an appellant’s representative through a properly executed VA Form 22a, “Appointment of Attorney or Agent as Claimant’s Representative.” This form gives the attorney power of attorney to represent the appellant. In lieu thereof, an attorney may state in writing on his or her letterhead that he or she is authorized to represent the appellant in order to have access to information in the appellant’s file pertinent to the particular claim presented. For an attorney to have complete access to all information in an individual’s records, the attorney must provide a signed consent from the appellant or the appellant’s guardian. Such consent shall be equivalent to an executed power of attorney. The designation must be of an individual attorney, rather than a firm or partnership. An appellant may limit an attorney’s right to act as his or her representative in an appeal to representation with respect to a specific claim for one or more specific benefits by noting the restriction in the written designation. Unless specifically